

Continuation Appl. of Serial No. 09/986,597
Preliminary Amendment dated January 27, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 2-16 are pending in this application. Claim 1 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer in favor of claims 2-16, as newly added, in accordance with current Office policy, to alternatively define Applicants' disclosed invention and to assist the Examiner to expedite compact prosecution of the instant application.

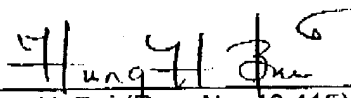
In view of the foregoing amendments, arguments and remarks, all claims are in condition for examination. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' attorney at the Washington DC area office at (703) 312-6600.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR §1.136. Please charge any shortage of fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, No. 01-2135 (Application No. 500.38183CC2), and please credit any excess fees to said deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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By


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HHB:btd

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